

Before you know it, the bells will be ringing and a new school year will be—unbelievably!—upon us. Avoid the last-minute scramble with this step-by-step guide to getting everything done. Plan to start three weeks prior to the first day, and tackle one task each day.

3 Weeks Before School Starts:

- Inventory your child's clothing and sell or give away any items that are too small. Make a list of what he needs before you start shopping for new clothes.
- Make a list of the school supplies you'll need to purchase new or replenish, as well as any other necessary items, like backpacks or lunchboxes.

2 Weeks Before School Starts:

- Plan morning, afternoon and evening routines, and involve your kids, whenever possible, in this process.

 Begin enforcing bedtimes and practice waking up at the same time each day.
- Start shopping for school supplies and clothes and confirm after-school child-care arrangements.

1 Week Before School Starts:

- Shop for groceries for next week's school lunches.
- Visit the school with your child for a re-familiarizing walk.

The Night before the First Day:

- Lay out clothes, shoes and backpacks for the next day.
- Have your camera ready to snap some first-day pictures.
- Get plenty of sleep!

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